

## **FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** August 10, 2017  
**Agenda Item:** 2018 Annual Elk Brucellosis Work Plan  
**Division:** Wildlife  
**Action Needed:** Proposed  
**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 15 Min

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### **Background**

In January 2013, the Commission endorsed elk management recommendations from a citizen working group for use in areas with brucellosis (the Designated Surveillance Area as described by the Montana Department of Livestock). Annual work plans describe specific management actions based upon these recommendations. Management efforts during 2016/2017 included two stackyards in the Dillon area, hazing efforts in the Paradise Valley and west of Bozeman, and limited kill permits in the Paradise Valley (no elk were killed). The proposed 2018 annual work plan largely restates the 2017 plan to include hazing, limited fencing, limited lethal removal of elk, habitat modifications, and other efforts to adjust elk distribution away from cattle at small scales to mitigate the risk of brucellosis transmission from elk to cattle. The proposed 2018 plan also clarifies/restates elements of the previous work plan, adds fence modifications to reduce impacts to existing fences when hazing elk away from cattle, and aligns the dates of the high-risk period with Department of Livestock dates for the same period (February 16 – July 15).

### **Public Involvement Process & Results**

The public comment opportunity for the proposed annual work plan will run from the August 10 Commission meeting through 5 p.m. Monday, September 18.

### **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP recommends adoption of the proposed 2018 annual work plan that largely restates earlier plans and includes a new option for potential modifications of existing fences to limit damage from hazing elk.

### **Alternatives and Analysis**

The proposal may be adopted as presented or with adjustment per FWP justifications, public comment, and Commission discussion.

### **Proposed Motion**

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve for public comment the proposed 2018 annual work plan for elk management in areas with brucellosis as presented by FWP.